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UPPER CANADA.

THE NIAGARA RIVER.—NAVY ISLAND.—(H.)

THE BUFFALO HISTORY MUSEUM

British Colonies.

UPPER CANADA.

In presenting to the reader the annexed Engraving of the Seat of the War now unhappily raging in the above Colony, it is scarcely necessary to observe, that our only intention is to *illustrate* the most popular topic of the day, without entering into its political or party incidents. We shall, therefore, proceed with the details of the Wood-cut—the physical aspect of the scene, and its most interesting localities—with occasional reference to such events as have become matters of history by being placed beyond party record.

Upper Canada, which is more completely in the hands of British settlers than the Lower province, is nearly twice the size of Great Britain. In its inhabited parts along the river, it is chiefly level, finely undulated, and towards the north it rises into ranges of mountains. Beyond its northern boundary, this country, too, is unlimited, or limited only by the Polar Ocean. Upper Canada, though receiving perpetual accessions from England, is still but beginning to be peopled. In 1828, the land on the side of the river opposite to Canada, contained thirty inhabitants on each square mile; while that of Upper Canada contained not more than six. Vast districts are still a wilderness, yet the soil is singularly fertile, the climate comparatively mild. Villages are rapidly planting where but a few years since was a forest; schools, mills, and churches, sure signs of civilisation, are erecting; villages are growing into towns; the Colonists are branching out in all directions; and the foundation is already laid of a permanent empire. It must not, however, be concealed that this prosperity has been much blighted by the internal dissensions of the country during the past eighteen months; a fact sufficiently denoted by the decrease in the number of emigrants to the Canadian shores during that period. It would, indeed, be but short-sighted policy in the emigrant to take his little property from our peaceful land to peril it in a country distracted by discontents and the fierceness of party spirit; a state of things which must ever powerfully militate against the success of the best directed industry.

But to appreciate the natural advantages of the Canadas as the seat of a future empire, it must be recollected that the great canal artery and life-giver of the country is the St. Lawrence itself, a river which throws all our European conceptions into the background, nearly equalling in length and surpassing in magnificence and picturesque beauty, perhaps every other river in the world; with an entrance extending from Nova Scotia to Labrador, 106 leagues, running a course of nearly 3,000 miles, varying from one to ninety miles broad, 2,000 of those miles navigable by large ships, and the rest by vessels up to sixty tons burden. It has, however, the still more characteristic feature of forming a succession of the largest and most important lakes in the world—a chain of fresh water seas passing through the north and west of the mighty region which, it is hoped, may yet form the noblest appanage of the British empire. This vast river frequently changes its name. From the sea to Montreal, it is called the St. Lawrence; thence to Kingston, in Upper Canada, the Cataguis, or Trouquois; between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, the *Niagara;* between Lakes Erie and St. Clair, the Detroit; between Lakes St. Clair and Huron, the St. Clair; and between Lakes Huron and Superior, the distance is called the Narrows, or falls of St. Mary.

"The scenery of this river, from its mouth to Quebec, is unrivalled in the whole western Continent. From the high grounds above the river, the landscape expands in sudden bursts of singular beauty,—a succession of deep bays, bold headlands, pastoral settlements, rocky islets, powerful rivers, some gliding through the valleys in broad and quiet channels, some rolling over precipices, some bursting through perpendicular chasms in the granite chain, as if an earthquake had just cleft the mountain; and moving in broad and quiet grandeur through the centre of this fine view, the St. Lawrence, covered with ships of war and trade, foreign commerce, and the active and animated navigation of the country."*

* From a picturesque "Sketch of the Canadas," in Blackwood's Magazine for the present month.—Although we have thus glanced at the general features of the St. Lawrence, in this outline of Upper Canada, we shall not be expected to notice the Lower province; especially as its most important towns have been already described in the *Mirror*. (See vol. xxix., page 81; and present volume, page 73.) It has been truly observed that Lower Canada, if fully peopled, would be equal to the largest European empire, excepting Russia. No country in the world would be a finer deposit for population, or afford more adequate means for putting the whole of its surface at the disposal of its population. Extending for near 1,000 miles along the St. Lawrence, it has that vast river for its central communication for bringing down the wealth of Upper Canada and the American continent, and by its sea-coast opening to the ocean and the commerce of Europe.—The extent of solid soil, even within the boundaries of the province, is immense, upwards of 200,000 square miles, about three times and a half the size of Great Britain; but, to the north extends a territory which may literally be called boundless, a region wild and wintry, but capable of supporting life, and offering to the energies of Englishmen a noble space for that industry and intelligence which are made to master the difficulties of nature. The great basin of the St. Lawrence contains in mass more than one half of the fresh water on this planet,—the solid contents in cubic feet of the Lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie, Ontario, and St. Lawrence being, according to Darby, 1,547,011,792,360,000, and the superficial area in square miles being 72,930, a quantity of water which would form a cubic column of nearly twenty-two miles on each side.

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Nevertheless, the most extraordinary feature of Upper Canada is its chain of lakes; in which it differs altogether from any European country. It is scarcely too much to assert, that these lakes exhibit a peculiar provision of nature, for the double purpose of tempering the severity of the climate, and of securing general communication.

We now come to describe the scene of

The Engraving,

showing that portion of the St. Lawrence which is named the Niagara River, — the outlet from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, and the Canadian Sea, and forming the boundary line between the British possessions in Upper Canada and the United States, (New York.) The Niagara is unlike most other rivers, being no larger at its mouth than at its source: indeed, it can scarcely be considered a river, but a grand natural canal, by which the superabundant waters of Lake Erie are poured into Lake Ontario. Its length, from lake to lake, is stated at from thirty-three to thirty-five miles; its general course is northernly, and it varies in breadth from half a mile to two miles. In this distance, the water sustains a fall of 322 feet, thus calculated: between Lake Erie and the Rapids, fifteen feet; in the Rapids, fifty-one feet; at the Falls, (of Niagara,) 150 feet; and the remainder before it reaches Lake Ontario. In the early part of its course, the river is broad and tranquil, its waters being nearly level with the shores; and a beautiful island, (the Grand,) divides it into two streams for a considerable distance. About two miles before reaching the Falls, navigation ends, a strong current is perceptible, and the glassy smoothness is disturbed by ripples; from this spot, too, the shores contract, and the bed of the river begins to slope; the water afterwards becomes much agitated, and the magnificent Rapids commence; rock after rock chafes the stream, which becomes white, and rushes with frightful velocity to the edge of the precipice, over which it plunges, with terrific impetuosity, discharging at the rate of one hundred millions of tons of water per hour! Immediately after the Fall, the river subsides, and rolls in an unruffled channel through a deep dell, bordered by rugged and perpendicular banks as far as Queenstown on the British side, and Lewistown on the American side. Thence the river passes Newark or Fort George, opposite which, on the American bank, is Fort Niagara. From Lake Erie to Queenstown, the face of the country presents a vast level plain, with the exception of the space between Chippawa and the Falls, where, in about two miles, the ground rises fifty feet, and the river, as before mentioned, descends about as much more: at Queenstown, this table-land abruptly terminates, and sinks to a plain nearly level with Lake Ontario. Over this precipice, it is supposed, the river in remote ages poured its waters, and that its continued and violent action has gradually worn away the rocks, and carried back the Falls to their present situation.

The current, for more than a mile above the Falls, is so swift, that many accidents happen from the foolhardiness of persons attempting to cross the river in small boats, near that part of it where the Rapids begin Chateaubriand had an almost miraculous escape from being thrown over the precipice above the Falls themselves. "On his arrival, he repaired to the Fall, having the bridle of his horse twisted round his arm. While he was stooping to look down, a rattlesnake stirred among the neighbouring bushes; the horse was startled, reared, and ran back towards the abyss. He could not disengage his arm from the bridle, and the horse, more and more frightened, dragged him after him. His fore-legs were all but off the ground, and squatting on the brink of the precipice, he was upheld merely by the bridle. He gave himself up for lost, when the animal himself, astonished at this new danger, threw himself forward with a pirouette, and sprang from the distance of ten feet from the edge of the abyss. Those who have dreamed that they were on the point of being thrown over a perpendicular precipice, and who, awaking, find themselves well, and comfortable in bed, will be able to form some idea of the sensation of Chateaubriand at the above moment."

There are many islands in the Niagara, all the way to the Falls, and close above them; but the principal is called Grand Island. Two small islands, Bath Island and Goat-Island, intervene on the American side, very near the Falls, and separate the river into two great branches; the great mass of water descending by the direct and far wider channel on the Canada side, by what is called the Horse-shoe Fall. Part of Goat Island, above 900 feet in width, is here intersected between the Horse-shoe Fall and the Fall on the American side.

In the annexed Birds-eye View, the main points are as follow:

A,—*Part of Lake Erie.* This magnificent lake is about 658 miles in circumference, but is of rather dangerous navigation. On it, during the American war, the belligerents each maintained a large naval force, and fought several hard contests; the most memorable being on September 10, 1813, between the English squadron, carrying 63 guns, and the American carrying 54 guns, aided, however, by a number of gun-boats, which terminated in the capture of the English fleet. The southern shore of this lake, which belongs to the United States, is low; the northern shore, which belongs to Canada, is generally abrupt and bold, and is thickly

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settled throughout. But the Erie is still more remarkable, as forming the head of the most extensive navigation in the world, and enabling vessels to visit the Atlantic, north and south. The great American Erie Canal connects the waters of the Lake with those of the Hudson: this is a noble achievement of human industry; it is 363 miles, and occupied eight years in its formation, at a cost, including the Champlain Canal, of eleven millions of dollars; its annual tolls are now upwards of a million of dollars. Another great canal, the Aswego, connects the Erie canal with Lake Ontario.* About the central part of the northern coast of Lake Erie, the eccentric, but honest and philanthropic Colonel Talbot, whose recollections have so recently appeared in our pages, has founded his settlement. Ever since the year 1802, this benevolent man has persevered in opening the fine country around him to the English emigrant. The Upper Canada Company have their land in this district; the scenery around which, on the river Maitland, is more English-like than that of any other in America. "London," one of its towns, says Mr. Montgomery Martin, "though at present small, is in the heart of a fertile country, on the banks of the river Thames, and will, no doubt, rapidly increase; who can say but that at some distant (may it be far distant) day the modern Babylon may be reduced to a heap of ruins, and its celebrity and fame be revived across the Western Atlantic."

B.—*The American Town of Buffalo*, just below which the Erie Canal commences. Buffalo is a thriving place, well built, and daily increasing in its number of inhabitants: its population in 1833 was about 8,000. There are many good hotels, one of which can accommodate 200 persons. Buildings are going on rapidly, and there is every prospect of Buffalo becoming one of the greatest commercial stations in the state of New York. Its situation, though having one front upon the Lake, is far from advantageous: so low, indeed, is some part of the town, that heavy westernly gales raise such a swell on this vast inland sea, as frequently to inundate considerable property on the margin of the water. The rise of Buffalo has been extraordinarily rapid; for, in 1814, the whole town, save one house, was burnt by the British, in retaliation for devastation of a similar kind committed by the Americans at Newark, on the Canadian frontier, near the mouth of the Niagara.

C.—*Village of Black Rock*, three miles distant from Buffalo. This place also, being on the frontier, suffered during the barbarous and retaliatory warfare of 1812, but has again sprung up into a moderately-sized town, where schooners and brigs are built for the navigation of the lakes. Here the river is crossed by a horse-ferry-boat; and is an impressive prospect of the mighty mass of waters rushing from the inland seas to join their parent ocean.

D.—*Fort Erie*, memorable as the point attacked by the British in 1814, where they were repulsed with great loss. At this point, the Niagara first assumes the character of a river.

E.—*The Hamlet of Waterloo*, of course British. A recent traveller, having crossed hither from the American side, observes: "every thing denoted a different country: the first signs we saw over the public-house doors were the Crown, the King's Arms, with other loyal superscriptions, and the first steamer which dashed past us was the Adelaide. It was truly a relief to my eyes, after the many and various Eagles I had sojourned at, and the divers Citizens' Union Line steam-boats in which I had travelled."

F.—*Indian Village and Mission-House*, about four miles from Buffalo; inhabited by the Seneca Tribe, (resembling the dark and vengeful Malays,) whose farms and woods closely verge upon the hamlet. The houses resemble those of the American labourers, and "the Indian Hotel" is a respectable edifice. The school in the Mission-house is an object of great interest. The church is a wooden structure, and will accommodate about 250 persons: the psalms and prayers are printed on one page of the book in the Seneca, and on the opposite in the English language: the members of the church marry according to the established forms.

G.—*Grand Island.*—Beyond Black Rock the river widens to embrace Grand Island, twelve miles long, and from two to seven miles broad. Above it lies Square Island; and, at its foot,

H.—Navy Island, belonging to the Canadians; all the other islands in the Niagara having been ceded to the United States by the decision of the commissioners, under the sixth article of the Treaty of Ghent. It consists of about 1,000 acres, and is well wooded, level, and about eight feet above the river. Upon this speck of land, the interest of the war may hereafter be concentrated; the

* Other canals, scarcely less important, connect the principal lakes and rivers, and, within a short period, it is expected that the steam-boats from New Orleans will reach the lake. On the British side, the efforts are scarcely less vigorous. The ships from Quebec will soon pass into Erie through Ontario; thence the Ohio and Pennsylvania canals will open a communication through the Ohio river to the Mississippi, and even the Gulf of Mexico will be reached by the way of the upper lakes. In fact, the whole country lies open, a great theatre for all the triumphs of inland navigation; and, it is remarked, that as in the Alps, a person, without changing place, may drink of water which flows into the Mediterranean, the Rhine, and the German Ocean, so the point will, probably, yet be fixed in this region, from which the individual may find his way, either by canal or by river, to the Atlantic, to the Gulf of Mexico, to the Pacific, or to Hudson's Bay.

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Insurgents having established their camp here: it is described as an excellent military position, there being a facility of communication with both shores. The position of the Loyalists, according to the latest news, was about half a mile distant, at

I.—*Chippawa Village;* whither, from Black Rock, a distance of sixteen miles there is a good level road along the river side. Chippawa is memorable as the scene of an obstinate engagement between the British and Americans, on July 5th, 1814, in which the Marquis of Tweddale was severely wounded. Both parties claimed the victory, but the British are presumed to have been defeated. At Chippawa may be distinctly seen the spray of the Niagara Falls, three miles distant. A recent traveller, Lieutenant Coke, while walking over Battle Ground in quest of some mound or monument to the memory of the numerous brave who fell here, saw the light white cloud of spray rising from the Falls, beautifully gilded by the declining sun. But the vast clouds of vapour which are thrown up from the Falls may be seen from a much greater distance, appearing at Buffalo, which is 20 miles, like a pillar of smoke. When the sun and the position of the observer is favourable, they sparkle like diamonds, with occasional flashes of the most brilliant colours.

J.—*Rapids.* Beyond Navy Island, the river resembles a bay more than two miles in breadth, and then narrows down by the Rapids, (already noticed,) to

K.—*The Falls of Niagara and Goat Island.* The latter is of wedge-like form, about half a mile in length, presenting its broadest end to the precipice; it is thickly wooded, but intersected by drives and paths, and contains a refreshment-house, several mills, and a museum of natural history. A singular bridge or pier has been projected nearly 300 feet into the river, where a single piece of timber overhangs the edge of the Great Fall about 15 feet. We shall not be expected here to detail this mighty wonder — this "great deep ocean thrown over a precipice nearly 150 feet high." Its tremendous noise has been compared to the pealing of artillery of two large squadrons at sea in thick weather, the auditor being about five miles distant; to the incessant rumbling, deep, monotonous, sound, accompanied by the tremour in a grist mill of very large dimensions, where many pairs of stones are at work; and to the tumbling of a vast number of large round stones, from a huge precipice into water of profound depth; and this noise may be heard, when the atmosphere is favourable, 50 miles. The Canadian side is exquisitely beautiful, richly cultivated and thickly peopled; and the rapid progress of business and the arts, and the inexhaustible water power, will soon render it one of the most important parts of the British dominions. About half a mile below the Falls, was fought the battle of Lundylane, or Bridgewater, very soon after the action at Chippawa, already noticed; in which, of 9,000 men on both sides, 1,738 were killed, wounded, or missing.

L.—*The Village of Lewistown*, opposite *Queenstown;* a miserable scene of ruins since the war.

M.—*Fort Niagara*, a neatly built American station, not 800 yards distant from, and opposite

N.—*Fort George*, or Niagara, or Newark, formerly the seat of Government, and the sea-port, (if it may be so called,) of the district: the fort is strong, and the neat town all bustle and gaiety, owing to the frequent arrival and departure of steam-boats, sloops, and other vessels. The town was built so far back as 1725, passed into the hands of the British by the conquest of Canada, in 1759, was ceded by treaty to the United States in 1794, and restored to them after the peace of 1814. The *district* termed Niagara is one of the finest and richest tracts in the world, and most eligibly situate in a bight, as it were, between the magnificent lakes of Erie and Ontario. Throughout this and the adjoining sections of the province, the forests are remarkable for the steady growth and rich foliage of the trees: in several places, immense prairies or natural meadows extend for hundreds of miles; and with the vista relieved by occasional clumps of oak, white pine, and poplar, as if planted by man with a view to ornament. With a delicious climate stretching from 42° to 44° north latitude, this section is the finest in Upper Canada.—The town of Niagara, with its decaying breastworks and redoubts, remind one of the ravages of war, and are put to shame by the whitened walls of Fort Niagara, which, from its peculiar position might annoy the English town by a very effective bombardment.

O.—*Tonnewanta Town and Creek.*

P.—*Willand Canal,* a work of great commercial importance to Canada. It affords communication for vessels as large as navigate the lakes, viz. of the burden of 125 tons, and for steam-vessels, between the Lakes Ontario and Erie, by a line of canal about 43 miles long; in which there are 334 feet of lockage, and great natural obstacles; so that the inconvenience which the Falls of Niagara create, as far as internal commerce is concerned, are removed. This noble work was commenced by the Canada Land Company, and by aid of the British Government, in money and land, has been completed, or nearly so, at an expense of 500,000*l.* There are two prodigious excavations in the line: one of them called, *par excellence*, the Deep Cut, (the greatest artificial work in America, except the Desague, in Mexico,) passes

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through an almost abrupt rocky summit of 27 feet above the canal bottom.

Q.—*Chippawa River.*

R.—*Part of Lake Ontario*; celebrated for its depth, in some places unfathomable, and for the clearness of its water. Its length is about 170 miles, and its circumference, 467; its height above the level of the sea 230 feet. The shore, on the north, is bold, on the American side, low, on the Canada side, well wooded; with thriving settlements, and the picturesque town of Toronto, (the Capital of Upper Canada,) overhanging the waters, on the north-eastern shore; Kingston, the best harbour to the north-east, belongs to the British. Thence to Brockville, the lake which narrows at last to two miles, is studded with multitudes of islands, far exceeding the number of 1,000 generally allotted to it. They are almost all covered with wood, and luxuriant vegetation. Nothing is wanting but the vicinity of mountains and hills to make this the most beautiful scenery in the world.

Such is but an outline of the Niagara and its banks, at this moment in the Transatlantic newspaper phrase, "bristling with bayonets," and pointed to as the theatre of an obstinate civil war. Heaven grant that such predictions be not verified!—for, who can forget the succession of severe actions which took place upon these banks between the Americans and the British in the years 1812, 1813, and 1814; of which a recent visiter* gives the following horrifying picture: "The warfare being altogether on the frontier, and the militia on both sides of the river called out, the contest was attended with all the aggravations of a state of civil war; the combatants being not merely near neighbours in point of residence, but so connected with each other by blood, that brothers, and fathers-in-law were obliged to fight against each other. Every town on the boundary line was in the course of the war destroyed, either by the one belligerent or the other, as they were alternately successful; and the inhabitants, women and children, frequently forced to take refuge in the neighbouring forest from the inclemency of the weather, and the barbarity of their enemies, part of whom were Indians." Since this unhappy period, how much have peace and civilization effected upon these shores to obliterate the "damned spots" in this sad history; and, painful would it be to behold the labours of human industry, after the lapse of but a quarter of a century, again arrested in their healthful course by "a misfortune ever deplorable and yet common." Burke has well said, "Laws are commanded to hold their tongues among arms; and tribunals fall to the ground with the peace they are no longer able to uphold."

* Mr. James Stuart; in his excellent work, Three Years in North America.

THE SEVERE WINTER.

(To the Editor.)

At this cold season of the year, when fire, and frost, and snow, have become so rife, all things which bring to mind the pleasurable associations of our summer rambles in fields and gardens, cannot, I presume, be altogether void of interest; and, with this view, I send you the result, in a few words, of some inquiries I have been making, as to the effect of this long-continued and severe winter on different plants.

In all the nursery-grounds about London, a very considerable number of the Half-hardy Shrubby plants have been more or less injured. Herbaceous plants, however, have sustained little damage, in consequence, perhaps, of the much greater quantity of snow than usual; and of this we have examples in those common indigenous species, the rosemary, red Archangel, winter-hellebore, snow-drop, daisy, and groundsel, which are now in full bloom.

I am informed too, by a gentleman just arrived from Edinburgh, that the *Roscoea purpurea*, one of the *Zinziberaceæ*, has lived in the open border of the celebrated garden of that city, without protection, during several winters, and flowered freely each summer! This splendid plant was introduced by Mr. Roscoe from the East Indies, and has been cultivated by him in the Liverpool Botanic Garden for several years past—which would seem to afford a corroborative proof of the remark of Sir John Sinclair, who maintained that any plant, of whatever climate, might be naturalized in Britain by proper culture.

It strikes me, that, the extent of injury which has been done to various families of plants in the course of the present winter, might be correctly displayed in a tabular form, and thus prove of much interest to the Meteorological Botanist; the several degrees of temperature being noted, the species arranged according to their natural orders, and the situations they occupy in the garden—whether upon walls, or in exposed or sheltered borders. T. H.

Fellow of the Botanical Society of London, and Associate of the Medico-Botanical Society.

Anecdote Gallery.

BUONAPARTIANA.

The following letter was written by Buonaparte to Talma, after the siege of Toulon:—"I have fought like a lion for the Republic; but my good friend, Talma, as my reward I am left to die with hunger. I am at the bottom of all my resources. That miserable fellow, Aubry,* leaves me in the mire, when he might do something for me. I feel that I have the power of doing more than gene-

* Minister of War.

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and possessed a voice of thunder. His countenance was that of an Ogre on the shoulders of a Hercules. He was as fond of the pleasures of vice as of the practice of cruelty; and it was said there were times when he became humanized amidst his debauchery, laughed at the terror which his furious declamations excited, and might be approached with safety, like the Maelstrom at the turn of tide. His profusion was indulged to an extent hazardous to his popularity, for the populace are jealous of a lavish expenditure, as raising their favourites too much above their own degree; and the charge of peculation finds always ready credit with them, when brought against public men.

Robespierre possessed this advantage over Danton, that he did not seem to seek for wealth, either for hoarding or expending, but lived in strict and economical retirement, to justify the name of the Incorruptible, with which he was honoured by his partizans. He appears to have possessed little talent, saving a deep fund of hypocrisy, considerable powers of sophistry, and a cold exaggerated strain of oratory, as foreign to good taste, as the measures he recommended were to ordinary humanity. It seemed wonderful, that even the seething and boiling of the revolutionary cauldron should have sent up from the bottom, and long supported on the surface, a thing so miserably void of claims to public distinction; but Robespierre had to impose on the minds of the vulgar, and he knew how to beguile them, by accommodating his flattery to their passions and scale of understanding, and by acts of cunning and hypocrisy, which weigh more with the multitude than the words of eloquence, or the arguments of wisdom. The people listened as to their Cicero, when he twanged out his apostrophes of *Pauvre Peuple*, *Peuple vertueux!* and hastened to execute whatever came recommended by such honied phrases, though devised by the worst of men for the worst and most inhuman of purposes.

Vanity was Robespierre's ruling passion, and though his countenance was the image of his mind, he was vain even of his personal appearance, and never adopted the external habits of a sans culotte. Amongst his fellow Jacobins, he was distinguished by the nicety with which his hair was arranged and powdered; and the neatness of his dress was carefully attended to, so as to counterbalance, if possible, the vulgarity of his person. His apartments, though small, were elegant, and vanity had filled them with representations of the occupant. Robespierre's picture at length hung in one place, his miniature in another, his bust occupied a niche, and on the table were disposed a few medallions exhibiting his head in profile. The vanity which all this indicated was of the coldest and most selfish character, being such as considers neglect as insult, and receives homage merely as a tribute; so that, while praise is received without gratitude, it is withheld at the risk of mortal hate. Self-love of this dangerous character is closely allied with envy, and Robespierre was one of the most envious and vindictive men that ever lived. He never was known to pardon any opposition, affront, or even rivalry; and to be marked in his tablets on such an account was a sure, though perhaps not an immediate, sentence of death. Danton was a hero, compared with this cold, calculating, creeping miscreant; for his passions, though exaggerated, had at least some touch of humanity, and his brutal ferocity was supported by brutal courage.—*(Continued at page 17.)*

THE EPICUREAN.

By T. Moore, Esq.

THE following is described by Alciphron, the hero of the tale, at the termination of a festival, in a tone which strongly reminds us of Rasselas:—

"The sounds of the song and dance had ceased, and I was now left in those luxurious gardens alone. Though so ardent and active a votary of pleasure, I had, by nature, a disposition full of melancholy;—an imagination that presented sad thoughts even in the midst of mirth and happiness, and threw the shadow of the future over the gayest illusions of the present. Melancholy was, indeed, twin-born in my soul with passion; and, not even in the fullest fervour of the latter were they separated. From the first moment that I was conscious of thought and feeling, the same dark thread had run across the web; and images of death and annihilation mingled themselves with the most smiling scenes through which my career of enjoyment led me. My very passion for pleasure but deepened these gloomy fancies. For, shut out, as I was by my creed, from a future life, and having no hope beyond the narrow horizon of this, every minute of delight assumed a mournful preciousness in my eyes, and pleasure, like the flower of the cemetery, grew but more luxuriant from the neighbourhood of death. This very night my triumph, my happiness, had seemed complete. I had been the presiding genius of that voluptuous scene. Both my ambition and my love of pleasure had drunk deep of the cup for which they thirsted.

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Looked up to by the learned, and loved by the beautiful and the young, I had seen, in every eye that met mine, either the acknowledgment of triumphs already won, or the promise of others, still brighter, that awaited me. Yet, even in the midst of all this, the same dark thoughts had presented themselves; the perishableness of myself and all around me every instant recurred to my mind. Those hands I had prest—those eyes, in which I had seen sparkling a spirit of light and life that should never die—those voices that had talked of eternal love—all, all, I felt, were but a mockery of the moment, and would leave nothing eternal but the silence of their dust!

"Oh, were it not for this sad voice,
Stealing amid our mirth to say,
That all in which we most rejoice,
Ere night may be the earth-worm's prey:
But for this bitter—only this—
Full as the world is brimm'd with bliss,
And capable as feels my soul
Of draining to its depth the whole,
I should turn earth to heaven, and be,
If bliss made gods, a deity!"

THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

I HAD already seen some of the most celebrated works of nature in different parts of the globe; I had seen Etna and Vesuvius; I had seen the Andes almost at their greatest elevation; Cape Horn, rugged and bleak, buffeted by the southern tempest; and, though last not least, I had seen the long swell of the Pacific; but nothing I had ever beheld or imagined could compare in grandeur with the Falls of Niagara. My first sensation was that of exquisite delight at having before me the greatest wonder of the world. Strange as it may appear, this feeling was immediately succeeded by an irresistible melancholy. Had this not continued, it might perhaps have been attributed to the satiety incident to the complete gratification of "hope long deferred;" but so far from diminishing, the more I gazed, the stronger and deeper the sentiment became. Yet this scene of sadness was strangely mingled with a kind of intoxicating fascination. Whether the phenomenon is peculiar to Niagara I know not, but certain it is, that the spirits are affected and depressed in a singular manner by the magic influence of this stupendous and eternal fall. About five miles above the cataract the river expands to the dimensions of a lake, after which it gradually narrows. The Rapids commence at the upper extremity of Goat Island, which is half a mile in length, and divides the river at the point of precipitation into two unequal parts; the largest is distinguished by the several names of the Horseshoe, Crescent, and British Fall, from its semicircular form and contiguity to the Canadian shore. The smaller is named the American Fall. A portion of this fall is divided by a rock from Goat Island, and though here insignificant in appearance, would rank high among European cascades. * * *

The current runs about six miles an hour; but supposing it to be only five miles, the quantity which passes the falls in an hour is more than eighty-five millions of tuns avoirdupois; if we suppose it to be six, it will be more than one hundred and two millions; and in a day would exceed two thousand four hundred millions of tuns. * * *

The next morning, with renewed delight, I beheld from my window—I may say, indeed, from my bed—the stupendous vision. The beams of the rising sun shed over it a variety of tints; a cloud of spray was ascending from the crescent; and as I viewed it from above, it appeared like the steam rising from the boiler of some monstrous engine. * *

This evening I went down with one of our party to view the cataract by moonlight. I took my favourite seat on the projecting rock, at a little distance from the brink of the fall, and gazed till every sense seemed absorbed in contemplation. Although the shades of night increased the sublimity of the prospect and "deepened the murmur of the falling floods," the moon in placid beauty shed her soft influence upon the mind, and mitigated the horrors of the scene. The thunders which bellowed from the abyss, and the loveliness of the falling element, which glittered like molten silver in the moonlight, seemed to complete in absolute perfection the rare union of the beautiful with the sublime. * * *

While reflecting upon the inadequacy of language to express the feelings I experienced, or to describe the wonders which I surveyed, an American gentleman, to my great amusement, tapped me on the shoulder, and "guessed" that it was "*pretty droll!*" It was difficult to avoid laughing in his face; yet I could not help envying him his vocabulary, which had so eloquently released me from my dilemma. * * *

Though earnestly dissuaded from the undertaking, I had determined to employ the first fine morning in visiting the cavern beneath the fall. The guide recommended my companion and myself to set out as early as six o'clock, that we might have the advantage of the morning sun upon the waters. We came to the guide's

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house at the appointed hour, and disencumbered ourselves of such garments as we did not wish to have wetted; descending the circular ladder, we followed the course of the path running along the top of the *debris* of the precipice, which I have already described. Having pursued this track for about eighty yards, in the course of which we were completely drenched, we found ourselves close to the cataract. Although enveloped in a cloud of spray, we could distinguish without difficulty the direction of our path, and the nature of the cavern we were about to enter. Our guide warned us of the difficulty in respiration which we should encounter from the spray, and recommended us to look with exclusive attention to the security of our footing. Thus warned, we pushed forward, blown about and buffeted by the wind, stunned by the noise, and blinded by the spray. Each successive gust penetrated us to the very bones with cold. Determined to proceed, we toiled and struggled on, and having followed the footsteps of the guide as far as was possible consistently with safety, we sat down, and having collected our senses by degrees, the wonders of the cavern slowly developed themselves. It is impossible to describe the strange unnatural light reflected through its crystal wall, the roar of the waters, and the blasts of the hurried hurricane which perpetually rages in its recesses. We endured its fury a sufficient time to form a notion of the shape and dimensions of this dreadful place. The cavern was tolerably light, though the sun was unfortunately enveloped in clouds. His disc was invisible, but we could clearly distinguish his situation through the watery barrier. The fall of the cataract is nearly perpendicular. The bank over which it is precipitated is of concave form, owing to its upper stratum being composed of lime-stone, and its base of soft slate-stone, which has been eaten away by the constant attrition of the recoiling waters. The cavern is about one hundred and twenty feet in height, fifty in breadth, and three hundred in length. The entrance was completely invisible. By screaming in our ears, the guide contrived to explain to us that there was one more point which we might have reached had the wind been in any other direction. Unluckily it blew full upon the sheet of the cataract, and drove it in so as to dash upon the rock over which we must have passed. A few yards beyond this, the precipice becomes perpendicular, and, blending with the water, forms the extremity of the cave. After a stay of nearly ten minutes in this most horrible purgatory, we gladly left it to its loathsome inhabitants, the eel and the water-snake, who crawl about its recesses in considerable numbers,—and returned to the inn.—*De Roos's Travels in the United States, &c.*

THE GUILLOTINE.

THE first sight, however, which it fell to my lot to witness at Brussels in this second and short visit, was neither gay nor handsome, nor dear in any sense, but the very reverse; it being that of the punishment of the guillotine inflicted on a wretched murderer, named John Baptist Michel.* Hearing, at the moment of my arrival, that this tragical scene was on the point of being acted in the great square of the market-place, I determined for once to make a sacrifice of my feelings to the desire of being present at a spectacle, with the nature of which the recollections of revolutionary horrors are so intimately associated. Accordingly, following to the spot a guard of soldiers appointed to assist at the execution, I disengaged myself as soon as possible from the pressure of the immense crowd already assembled, and obtained a seat at the window of a house immediately opposite the Hotel-de-Ville, in front of the principal entrance to which the guillotine had been erected. At the hour of twelve at noon precisely, the malefactor, tall, athletic, and young, having his hands tied behind his back, and being stripped to the waist, was brought to the square in a cart, under an escort of gen-d'armes, attended by an elderly and respectable ecclesiastic; who, having been previously occupied in administering the consolations of religion to the condemned person in prison, now appeared incessantly employed in tranquillizing him on his way to the scaffold. Arrived near the fatal machine, the un-

* The circumstances of the case were as follows:— Jean Baptiste Michel, aged 36, a blacksmith, accompanied by a female named Marie Anne Debeyst, aged 22, was proceeding from Brussels to Villvorde, one day in the month of March, 1824. In the Alléverte, they overtook a servant girl, who was imprudent enough to mention to them that her master had entrusted her with a sum of money. Near Villvorde, Michel and his paramour, having formed their plan of assassination and robbery, rejoined the poor girl, whom they had momentarily left, and violently demanded the bag containing the gold and silver. The unfortunate young creature resisted their attacks as long as she could, but was soon felled to the ground by Michel, who with a thick stick fractured her skull, whilst Debeyst trod upon the prostrate victim of their horrid crime. These wretches were shortly afterwards arrested and committed to prison. On the 5th of April, 1825, they were condemned to death by the Court of Assize at Brussels, but implored of the royal clemency a commutation of punishment. This was granted to the woman, whose sentence was changed to perpetual imprisonment. Michel's petition was rejected.

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happy man stepped out of the vehicle, knelt at the feet of his confessor, received the priestly benediction, kissed some individuals who accompanied him, and was hurried by the officers of justice up the steps of the cube-form structure of wood, painted of a blood-red, on which stood the dreadful apparatus of death. To reach the top of the platform, to be fast bound to a board, to be placed horizontally under the axe, and deprived of life by its unerring blow, was, in the case of this miserable offender, the work literally of a moment. It was indeed an awfully sudden transit from time to eternity. He could only cry out, "*Adieu, mes amis*," and he was gone. The severed head, passing through a red-coloured bag fixed under, fell to the ground — the blood spouted forth from the neck like water from a fountain—the body, lifted up without delay, was flung down through a trap-door in the platform. Never did capital punishment more quickly take effect on a human being; and whilst the executioner was coolly taking out the axe from the groove of the machine, and placing it, covered as it was with gore, in a box, the remains of the culprit, deposited in a shell, were hoisted into a wagon, and conveyed to the prison. In twenty minutes all was over, and the *Grande Place* nearly cleared of its thousands, on whom the dreadful scene seemed to have made, as usual, the slightest possible impression.—*Stevenson's Tour in France, Switzerland, &c.*

THE HEIR PRESUMPTIVE.

Of all the miseries of human life, and God knows they are manifold enough, there are few more utterly heart-sickening and overwhelming than those endured by the unlucky Heir Presumptive; when, after having submitted to the whims and caprices of some rich relation, and endured a state of worse than Egyptian bondage, for a long series of years, he finds himself cut off with a shilling, or a mourning ring; and the El Dorado of his tedious term of probation and expectancy devoted to the endowment of methodist chapels and Sunday schools; or bequeathed to some six months' friend (usually a female housekeeper, or spiritual adviser) who, entering the vineyard at the eleventh hour, (the precise moment at which his patience and humility become exhausted,) carries off the golden prize, and adds another melancholy confirmation, to those already upon record, of the fallacy of all human anticipations. It matters little what may have been the motives of his conduct; whether duty, affection, or that more powerful incentive self-interest; how long or how devotedly he may have humoured the foibles or eccentricities of his relative; or what sacrifices he may have made to enable him to comply with his unreasonable caprices: the result is almost invariably the same. The last year of the Heir Presumptive's purgatory, nay, perhaps even the last month, or the last week, is often the drop to the full cup of his endurance. His patience, however it may have been propped by self-interest, or feelings of a more refined description, usually breaks down before the allotted term has expired; and the whole fabric it has cost him such infinite labour to erect, falls to the ground along with it. It is well if his personal exertions, and the annoyances to which he has subjected himself during the best period of his existence, form the whole of his sacrifices. But, alas! it too often happens that, encouraged by the probability of succeeding in a few years to an independent property, and ambitious, moreover, of making such an appearance in society as will afford the old gentleman or lady no excuse for being ashamed of their connexion with him, he launches into expenses he would never otherwise have dreamed of incurring, and contracts debts without regard to his positive means of liquidating them, on the strength of a contingency which, if he could but be taught to believe it, is of all earthly anticipations the most remote and uncertain. A passion for unnecessary expense is, under different circumstances, frequently repressed by an inability to to procure credit; but it is the curse and bane of Mr. Omnium's nephew, and Miss Saveall's niece, that so far from any obstacle being opposed to their prodigality, almost unlimited indulgence is offered, nay, actually pressed upon them, by the trades-people of their wealthy relations; who take especial care that their charges shall be of a nature to repay them for any complaisance or long suffering, as it regards the term of credit, they may be called upon to display. But independently of the additional expense into which the Heir Presumptive is often seduced by the operation of these temptations, and his anxiety to live in a style in some degree accordant with his expectations, what is he not called upon to endure from the caprices, old-fashioned notions, eccentricities, avarice, and obstinacy, of the old tyrant to whom he thus consents to sell himself, and it may be his family, body and soul, for an indefinite number of years.—*National Tales.*

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